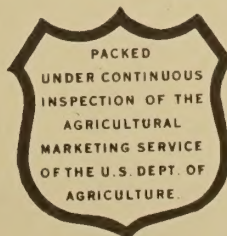


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What do these mean?

A Short Short
Story About
U. S. Grade
A, B, C
Labels



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U. S. Department of Agriculture

A SHORT, SHORT STORY ABOUT U. S. GRADE A,B,C LABELS
ON CANNED FRUITS AND VEGETABLES



As our story opens, Mrs. John Clark, typical of millions of the homemakers of this country, is standing in front of the shelves of canned fruits and vegetables in her local grocery store. She has been trying to decide which can of green beans (or was it tomatoes?) to buy. There was no question about the size of the can -- she had already decided on that, but what bothered her was which can to take. One was priced 12 cents, and the other 15 cents. And from the outside, both looked equally good. She read the labels carefully, but they didn't help. You could almost hear her say, "I wish these labels really made it possible to make a fair comparison. I suppose the 15-cent can is higher quality, but -- well, I wish I could be sure."

Mrs. Clark may have wanted some especially nice tomatoes (or was it green beans?) because she was having guests for dinner, and wanted everything a little better than she usually served. Or perhaps the food budget was a bit low and she wanted to economize and wondered if the tomatoes in the 12-cent can would satisfy her. What a problem! And, you know, both pennies saved and what you get for your money count.



And now a few days later --

Like millions of other homemakers, Mrs. Clark has found that there really is an answer to her problem. And now when she goes to the shelves of canned foods at her local grocery store, she looks for the cans that bear the Agricultural Marketing Service shields--just like those on the cover of this story.

We could end our story here, but instead we give you the few facts that John Clark's thrifty wife found out about these labels. Here is what she learned - - - - -

With U. S. Grade A,B,C labels on canned fruits and vegetables, you can select the quality that's right for your purpose and purse.

Without grade labels, it's difficult to tell the quality of the product in a can. Frequently, prices of canned food are not a safe guide by which to evaluate quality. Neither do superlative terms such as Superb, Superfine, Bestever, define quality.

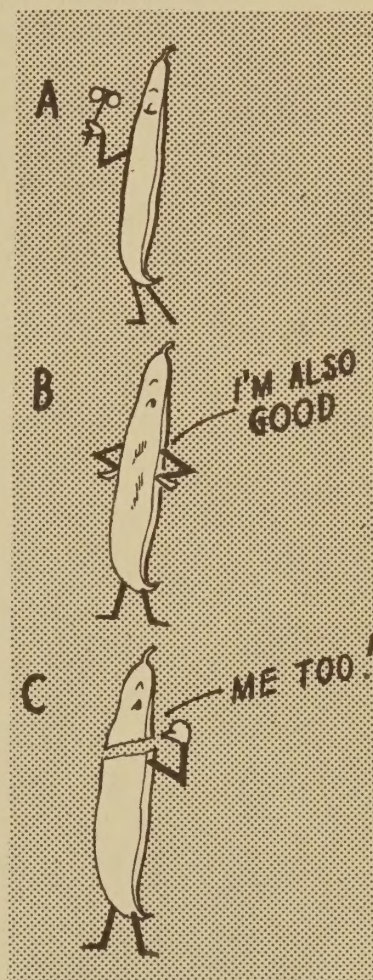
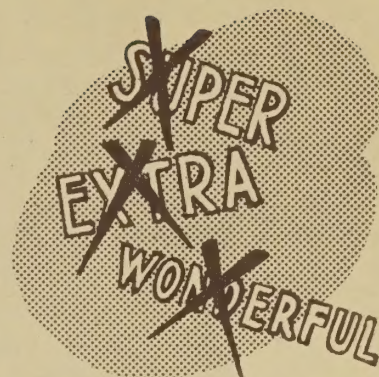
"U.S." on a can label, or a shield embossed in one end of a can or jar, tells you the product was processed under the continuous inspection plan of the Agricultural Marketing Service of the U. S. Department of Agriculture. Whether you choose U. S. Grade A, B, or C, you may know the product was canned in a plant operating under sanitary conditions.

U. S. Grade A stands for top quality. It calls for near-perfection in color, size, and tenderness. There are few, if any, blemishes. Grade A is desirable for special uses -- for salads or dishes when appearance counts.

U. S. Grade B products are satisfactory for most meals, but they fall just a little short of U. S. Grade A in some respects. U. S. Grade B vegetables, for example, may be a trifle less tender.

U. S. Grade C is a good quality, but fruits and vegetables of this grade are not quite so uniform in color, size, or maturity as those of U. S. Grade B. U. S. Grade C is a wise choice for puddings, soups, croquettes, and many other dishes.

Additional descriptive information on labels, such as the number of pieces in a can of apricots, the sieve size of peas, the strength of the sirup on fruits, and the net weight, also helps homemakers to make a wise selection.



Each canning factory operating under the Inspection Service has a Federal inspector in the plant to check each step of the processing and to grade the products for quality. Cannerys voluntarily operate under this Government inspection. This service was started in 1939 at the request of some canners.

Cost of the Government inspection is low. Owners of the plants pay the inspectors' salaries and incidental expenses. These expenses average only a fraction of a cent per case.

If homemakers like U. S. grade-labeled products and hence use more canned fruits and vegetables, it will mean that canners will have good reason to pack more and, in turn, farmers will have a larger market for canning crops. Also, the plan may induce farmers to raise more high-quality products. Thus, farmers and canners as well as consumers stand to benefit from the inspection service.

Most of you can find some of the canned food processed under Government inspection in your local stores. Identify them by U. S. Grade A, B, or C on the labels, or by the statement, "Packed under the Continuous Inspection of the Agricultural Marketing Service of the U. S. Department of Agriculture."

